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# Soviets Seem Bent On Foiling Verification

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## WASHINGTON

The Soviets behave as if they are bent on signing a SALT treaty, but they do not seem eager to facilitate its most crucial aspect—the process of verification.

In fact, Carter administration officials are becoming convinced that the Soviets have undertaken a multi-pronged campaign to reduce the effectiveness of American surveillance.

Espionage, camouflage, deception and political pressures are all being orchestrated to obscure from view the extent of Soviet military progress.

The first priority for the Soviets was to discover just how effective the American surveillance techniques were and how they worked. Their initial breakthrough on the espionage front was the TRW case in California last year. Two young Americans were found guilty of selling important technical secrets to the KGB.

But the Soviets really had no grasp of the advanced state of American satellite surveillance until a young ex-CIA employee, William Kampiles, obligingly sold them a description of the most modern

system, the KH-11. This break gave the Soviets vital information on the range and accuracy of the new satellite's vision and compromised the whole technology.

Russian defensive reaction to their newly perceived vulnerability has been prompt. The Soviets have begun using an unbreakable code to prevent U.S. monitoring of the tests of their biggest ICBM, the SS-18. If they do not agree to halt this practice, it will seriously impair this country's ability to ascertain that they are observing the SALT II limits on missile warheads.

Throughout SALT I, the Soviets have used extensive camouflage and deception techniques to hide defense plants and weapons systems that were not specifically subject to verification under the terms of the treaty.

Armed with Kampiles' information, they are now refining these camouflage measures and are removing from view advanced weaponry that they did not previously realize could be seen by the satellite.

Troubling signs of ambiguous activity have been spotted in one of the old missile fields that the Soviets were supposed to have deactivated. Now that they know the watching satellites have 20-20 vision, violations have become harder to identify.

On their long southern border stretching from Turkey through Iran to Afghanistan, the Soviets know there are ground sites from which coverage of their missile testing ranges could add to the evidence obtained by cameras in the sky.

A Communist coup in Afghanistan, political pressure on Turkey and mounting revolt in Iran could combine to make it impossible for U.S. observation posts to function anywhere along this arc. The loss of information would be serious.

The ultimate threat to American verification capability is the Soviet deployment of an anti-satellite orbital interceptor. Already successfully tested, it can be used in a time of grave crisis to close this country's eyes by destroying our surveillance satellites. No similar capability yet exists on the American side.

U.S. senators who will be looking skeptically at the verification involved in the SALT II agreement are already alarmed by the delays and uncertainty in ascertaining the offensive potential of the MiG-23s deployed in Cuba. If the President tolerates this ambiguity, his readiness to call the Soviets to account on SALT violations will be questioned.

In spite of the damage done by successful Soviet espionage, the American verification capability remains a formidable obstacle to major Soviet evasions. If specific guarantees against interference with verification procedures are written into the treaty, most experts agree that in this respect SALT is still a risk worth taking.

In making this case, CIA Director Stansfield Turner will be the Carter administration's principal witness before the Senate committees. Navigating through these mined and murky waters, the admiral's best course will be to maintain a scrupulous objectivity and to claim no more for verification than the facts allow, while admitting vulnerabilities where they exist.